



27th Annual Morris Hansen Lecture

International Developments in Census Taking

Speaker: Chris Skinner

*Professor of Statistics
London School of Economics and Political Science*

Discussants:

Julie Trépanier, *Director, Census Program Transformation
Statistics Canada*

John Thompson, *Executive Director
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics*

Abstract: The census continues to play vital roles in national statistical systems around the world. Yet the traditional census faces many challenges, including cost, timing, nonresponse and response burden, and speculation about its future is often pessimistic. These challenges have prompted much research and development in recent decades and an international perspective is needed with only one census per nation. This talk will outline developments in recent decades with a focus on statistical methodology. It builds on a review of research by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) into options for the 2021 census in England and Wales. These options reflected concerns raised by government of cost, accuracy and timeliness. Main lines of development in traditional census taking include internet self-enumeration, hand-held devices and supplementary uses of administrative data. Many countries have moved from a traditional census to the use of population and other registers, possibly combined with survey sources and this direction of development has shown no sign of reversing. Suitable registers are often not available, however, and no country has yet moved to a full administrative records census in the absence of a register. The methodological challenges arising in setting up such a census will be discussed, drawing on research undertaken by ONS.

Chris Skinner Chris Skinner has been Professor of Statistics at the London School of Economics since 2011. Before then, he held successive academic positions at the University of Southampton following a PhD there in 1982. His research interests focus on statistical aspects of survey and census methodology and include sampling, analysis of complex survey data, nonresponse, measurement error and statistical disclosure. He directed the ESRC Centre for Applied Social Surveys, the European Science Foundation program on Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences and the ESRC National Centre for Research Methods. His research in the methodology of official statistics has been driven by long-standing contracts with the UK Office for National Statistics. He has served on the Statistical Methods Advisory Committee of Statistics Canada as well as on various UK government advisory committees. He is a Fellow of the American Statistical Association and an elected Member of the International Statistical Institute. He was awarded the West prize by the Royal Statistical Society for contributions to official statistics and, in 2010, was awarded a CBE for services to social science.

**Thursday, November 2, 2017
3:30 – 5:30 pm**

**Jefferson Auditorium, US
Department of Agriculture
Independence Avenue
(between 12th and 14th Streets)
At the Smithsonian Metro Station
(Blue/Orange/Silver lines)**

A reception will follow at 5:30 pm in the Whitten Building Patio.
Please pre-register for this event to help facilitate access to the building on line at <http://www.nass.usda.gov/morrishansen/>



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